

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A level of a sound signal including a voice signal and an environmental noise signal is detected and a level (power level) is sampled in response to a clock signal. It  
5 is detected whether the presently sampled level increases from the previously sampled level. An environmental noise level is estimated such that, when the presently sampled level increases from the previously sampled level, difference between the presently and previously estimated  
10 environmental noise levels is lower than a predetermined value. When the presently sampled level decreases, the presently estimated environmental noise level is equalized to the presently sampled value. The environmental noise level is estimated only when the detected level is smaller  
15 than the predetermined value. The sampling interval may be smaller than 250 msec. Estimation may be stopped in the presence of voice signal. An environmental noise level may be estimated when the detected level is smaller than a reference. A communication apparatus and data terminal  
20 including the An environmental noise level estimation apparatus are also disclosed.